
Strict action against pollution stressed

PAKISTAN TODAY

Source: **STAFF REPORT**

November 15, 2011 on 11:36 PM

Deliberating on existing status along with health and environmental impacts of chemically-polluted sites in the country, experts and representatives of national and provincial environmental protection agencies (EPAs) on Tuesday unanimously resolved to accelerate the process of identifying the sites and concerted efforts for cleaning them through various initiatives. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with Blacksmith Institute-USA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Agency held a joint two-day national workshop on 'Assessment of Chemically-polluted Sites in Pakistan'. The purpose of the workshop was familiarisation with contaminated site assessment protocols, identification and risk assessment of contaminated sites, sites prioritisation, development of National Inventory Project, provision of data to government, international organizations and other stakeholders, and spearhead technical and financial support.



Dr Mahmood A Khwaja, the senior advisor on chemicals and sustainable industrial development at SDPI, recommended strict enforcement of NEQS and SMART, levy of pollution charges, waste water discharge licensing system and treatment plan, promotion of cleaner production centre and sites remediation. He said out of a 6,634 registered industries, 1228 were considered highly polluting. Dr Bashir Ahmed, the director general of EPA Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, said the contaminated sites should be investigated and cleaned up, as they posed serious threat to public health. He said the government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa was executing a project to check soil and ground water pollution around industrial estates.

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